

The Law of Jante: *Janteloven*

By R.Haines & D. Haines, UU Fellowship of La Crosse, Wisconsin, February 16, 2017

Opening Words: *You are not to think you're anyone special or that you're better than us.*

Check-in

Share a bit of yourself, a thought, an event in your life, or something intended to be meaningful to these friends with whom we gather again. Please respect the confidentiality of what is shared within this bonded group.

Topic: *Janteloven*, pros and cons.

The law of Jante requires every person to be quite humble. How humble, you ask? Certainly more humble than narcissistic and not as humble as self-immolation. But that is a very wide range of behaviors. The ten rules are:

1. You're not to think *you* are anything special.
2. You're not to think *you* are as good as *we* are.
3. You're not to think *you* are smarter than *we* are.
4. You're not to convince yourself that *you* are better than *we* are.
5. You're not to think *you* know more than *we* do.
6. You're not to think *you* are more important than *we* are.
7. You're not to think *you* are good at anything.
8. You're not to laugh at *us*.
9. You're not to think anyone cares about *you*.
10. You're not to think *you* can teach *us* anything.

Within the limits of our time here:

1. Offer a few examples of the impact of *Janteloven* on American or other cultures.
2. Are these rules ever, never, or sometimes appropriate?
3. Offer some examples of circumstances that warrant alternatives of to up to three of the rules.

References (*Janteloven* is not restricted to Norwegian culture but applies generally to the Danish related Scandinavian cultures):

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Janteloven>

<http://pinetribe.com/janteloven-root-scandinavian-modesty/>

<http://www.lifeinnorway.net/2015/06/what-exactly-is-janteloven/>

<http://blogs.transparent.com/norwegian/janteloven/>

Closing Words:

Thanks to all for coming today and for sharing your thoughts with the rest of us. I hope we are wiser and our time was well spent in each other's presence while listening to and expressing some thoughts on this topic. Peace be with you until we meet again.